

Emergency Response News



March 2003

IDEM handles environmental concerns following fire at a plating facility in Franklin, Johnson County

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) joined local and state agencies to provide sampling and oversight during a cleanup in the aftermath of a blaze at a plating facility in Franklin, Johnson County.

On March 18, an IDEM On Scene Coordinator received a call on the agency's 24-hour emergency response spill line about a fire at a plating facility. Local and state agencies' personnel at the scene were concerned about chemicals used in the plant's operation and requested IDEM's assistance.

IDEM's On Scene Coordinator met with the incident commander of the Franklin Fire Department and staff of the State Fire Marshall's Office to discuss response actions.

IDEM conducted air monitoring of the smoke plume. Cyanide was not detected in the air at the site.

IDEM staff was concerned about fire suppression water runoff because sampling results indicated a very low pH of 2-3. Firefighters had contained the fire suppression water in a roadside ditch, which was reaching capacity. The fire department brought in an excavator to dig a large sump to contain the fire suppression water. A contractor was hired to pump, haul and properly dispose of approximately 200,000 gallons of fire suppression water.

The On Scene Coordinator oversaw the cleanup undertaken by the contractor at the facility. Cleanup actions included soil and water sampling in and around the site, along a ditch, which is a tributary to Hurricane Creek, and at the sump containing fire suppression water.

An IDEM chemist evaluated the sampling results during the cleanup. IDEM staff worked with the responsible party to assure the industrial waste at the facility was disposed of properly.

The Johnson County Health Department handled health concerns.

IDEM staff continued to provide oversight until the cleanup had been completed to the agency's satisfaction to be protective of human health and the environment.



Site Snapshot

IDEM action:

Conducted air monitoring, soil and water sampling and oversaw the cleanup of fire suppression water and hazardous waste following an industrial fire.

Location:

Plating facility, Franklin, Johnson County

Primary substance of concern:

Copper cyanide

Environmental threat:

Potential contamination to waters of the state.

For further information about IDEM's emergency response action at this site, contact staff at the following phone numbers or toll-free at (800) 451-6027:

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